

XVIII.—*Obituary.*

ROBERT BIRKBECK.

WE cannot pass over in silence the death of one of the original members of the Union, although he severed his connection with it so long ago as 1868.

Robert Birkbeck, who died on 18 November last at the age of 83 at his house, Kinloch Hourn, in Inverness-shire, was born at Keswick in 1836, and was the fourth son of William Birkbeck, of Keswick Old Hall, Norfolk. He married in 1857 Mary Harriet, eldest daughter of the late Sir John William Lubbock, Bt., and was therefore a brother-in-law of the late Lord Avebury. He was also an uncle by marriage of Mr. J. H. Gurney. He took much interest in ornithology and was among the first to join the ranks of the Union when it was projected in 1858, though he resigned ten years later. He lived most of his life on his estate on the west coast of Scotland, and devoted himself to horticulture and the study and protection of some of our rarer birds.

A portrait of him as he appeared in his young days, with a short notice, will be found in the Jubilee Supplement volume of 'The Ibis' for 1908.

CHARLES EDWARD FAGAN, C.B.E., I.S.O.

Although not a member of the Union, Mr. Fagan, Secretary to the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, whose death took place at his residence in West Kensington on the 30th of January, was well known to a large number of our members. In 1873, at the age of eighteen, Mr. Fagan entered the British Museum, Bloomsbury, as a second-class assistant, and on the opening of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington he was transferred to the office of Professor (afterwards Sir William) Flower, the newly-appointed director. In 1889 he became assistant secretary, and when Sir Sidney Harmer was appointed director in 1919 he was made secretary.

Mr. Fagan made no claims to being an ornithologist, but he had a great interest in natural history, and was always ready to do all in his power to advance its study. He was specially interested in the preservation of the native fauna, not only in this country but in the Colonies, and acted as honorary treasurer to the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves and was the British representative on the International Committee for the Protection of Nature in 1913.

When the International Ornithological Congress met in this country in 1905, Mr. Fagan acted as honorary treasurer, and he undertook the same office for the British Ornithologists' Union Expedition to Dutch New Guinea. This expedition was instituted by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant at the Jubilee Meeting of the Union in 1908, and Mr. Fagan was personally responsible for much of the preliminary work in connection with its organization.

Mr. Fagan took a deep interest in the Bird Room and the development of the ornithological collections of our National Museum, so much so that the officers in charge of that department have always been indebted to him for assistance in many ways and on many occasions. Indeed, one is justified in saying that had it not been for Mr. Fagan's personal efforts and success in enlisting the sympathy and help of those who were in a position to further his many ideas for the development and expansion of the collections, the Museum would not now contain the magnificent series of the birds of the world which are now represented in its cabinets.

HENRY JONES.

We learn with deep regret of the death of Major Henry Jones, which occurred at his home at Wimbledon Park on the 5th of February, at the age of 83 years—he was buried at East Wickham. He was born on the 9th of February, 1838, near Folkestone, and was educated at Shrewsbury House School, Shooter's Hill. He joined the service, as an ensign, on the 25th of September, 1860, in the 94th Foot

Regt., serving under Lord Napier; on the 1st of August, 1862, he transferred to the 62nd Foot Regt., being made Lieutenant on the 24th of November, 1863, and promoted to Captain on the 7th of February, 1876. He left the service in 1881, after serving over fifteen years in India, and lived on retirement at East Wickham House, Welling, Kent, moving to Wimbledon Park in 1916.

For many years he came to the Bird Room at the Natural History Museum and made most careful and excellent drawings and sketches of birds with their natural surroundings.

He worked through every species of the Game Birds and the Ducks, and at the time of his death was engaged on the Corvidæ. We hear that his drawings have all been left to the Zoological Society. Major Jones was elected a member of the Union in 1900.

XIX.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

Bartsch on the Birds of the Tortugas.

[The Bird-rookeries of the Tortugas. By Paul Bartsch. Smithsonian Report for 1917, pp. 469-500, 38 pls. Published 1919.]

The Tortugas are the last of the long line of coral reefs and islands which string out in a westerly direction from the southern extremity of Florida into the Gulf of Mexico, and have long been renowned for the numbers of sea-birds visiting and breeding on them. The first ornithologist who visited them was J. J. Audubon in 1832. He has given us a most vivid account of his observations and experiences in his *Ornithological Biography*, portions of which are reprinted in the present paper. On one of the islands, Loggerhead Key, is the Marine Biological Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution, at which most of the recent work on birds, especially that of Messrs. Watson and Lashley (*vide Ibis*, 1916, p. 191), has been conducted. The most interesting island of the group is Bird Key, where, out of